

Worship at Home service Sunday 12th March 2023 with Revd Ian Forsyth

A gathering prayer:

Lord, we are drawn to your well,
to seek the water of eternal life.
Refresh us with your Word.
Surround us with your Love.
And fill us to overflowing with your Spirit,
the water of life,
that we may never be thirsty.
Amen.

StF 427 – I'm accepted, I'm forgiven.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iyW9s_BllVI

I'm accepted, I'm forgiven,
I am fathered by The true and living God
I'm accepted, no condemnation,
I am loved by the true and living God.

There's no guilt or fear as I draw near,
To the Saviour and Creator of the world
There is joy and peace
as I release my worship to you, O Lord.

Bible readings

Psalm 95 NIV

John 4 v 5 - 42 NIV

Prayers:

We pray for places around the world where there is no fresh water;
for places that suffer constant drought,
or where people have to walk miles to the nearest well.

Water of life, quench us with your life-giving Spirit and bring hope.

We pray for those on the margins of society
because of their status, age, disability, background or race;
those who seem to have no voice.

Help us to hear their cries, to listen to their pleas.

Help us to open our eyes and our ears.

Water of life, quench us with your life-giving Spirit and bring hope.

The Samaritan woman took a risk speaking to Jesus.

We pray for all who take risk on a daily basis in their jobs, for mere survival, to get food and water for their families; and for children involved in risky situations all over the world, trying to survive.

Water of life, quench us with your life-giving Spirit and bring hope.

We pray for those in our communities who need your water of life; those who are lonely, bereaved, sad, or have lost all hope.

Bring them your comfort, joy and peace.

Water of life, quench us with your life-giving Spirit and bring hope.

Amen.

This prayer was originally published in 2020.

Author unknown

On the third Sunday of Lent here are three short prayers.

Lord, as we enter Lent help us to draw near to you in praise, stripping away all that distracts us from worship. **Amen.**

As Jesus resisted temptation by the devil in the wilderness, help us reflect on his faithfulness to God, his rejection of worldly values and hold these thoughts in our hearts throughout Lent and beyond. **Amen**

Jesus, you prayed and fasted. As your disciple teach me about spiritual discipline in my relationship with you. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the
glory,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Time to reflect:

In John 4 we read the longest conversation recorded in the Bible of Jesus talking with the Samaritan woman at the well.

Jesus travels into Samaria, an area that most Jews would not enter as the Samaritans were hated by the Jewish Rabbi's, they had their own temple and intermarried outside of the Jewish Faith. Many Jews would travel a longer route around Samaria rather than travel through it.

In just four words by asking the Samaritan woman at the well 'Give me a drink' Jesus starts a conversation and speaks with someone who was seen by many as someone who was unclean. It was also against Jewish rules that a man should hold a conversation with a woman in the street.

Therefore, when the disciples returned from getting food, Jesus had spoken to the Samaritan woman, they were shocked. However, these four words had an impact on the Samaritan women as on leaving her jar, she said to those in the village. "**Come, see** a man who **told me everything** I ever did. Could this be **the Messiah?**"

In a recent conversation with a man at a food bank who was accessing a food parcel for his family, I had the opportunity to sit down with him and have a conversation about all the things going on his life. I asked what we could do as a church to help him. With tears in his eyes, he lifted his hands and just said 'this'.

As Christians we are called to live and work right where we are. Over the years in ministry, I have met and seen so many who want to have an opportunity to talk to someone and have connected with Church after someone taking time to listen to them and hear their story. Having a conversation can lead to others being introduced to Jesus.

Reflecting on this story there are some challenges for each of us as we think about the woman's 'left water jar'.

Firstly, have we left everything to follow Christ?

Secondly during this season of Lent have we been reading and reflecting on Bible verses and using them as we pray.

We are all offered a new Salvation, and this is a gift of God. In verse 9 the Samaritan woman questions why Jesus is talking to her, a Samaritan woman and hears Jesus' reply in verse 10 saying, "If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water."

There is a way of life offered to all who would choose to follow, we are all offered a new eternal Hope and Faith. Many people have different belief systems but our faith and trust in God is more than a belief system.

In verse 21 Jesus replied, “Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem.

Verse 24 says ‘For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.’ We are all called to receive the Holy Spirit and worship the Lord.

May we be able to say like the Samaritan woman to our friends and those we meet **Come, see** a man who **told me everything** I ever did. Could this be **the Messiah?**”

As Christians we are called to follow Christ.

StF 424 – God forgave my sin in Jesus’ name.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGKhz1_C41s

God forgave my sin in Jesus’ name;
I’ve been born again in Jesus’ name;
and in Jesus’ name I come to you
to share his love as he told me to:

He said, Freely, freely you have received,
Freely, freely give;

Go in my name and, because you believe,
Others will know that I live.

All power is given in Jesus’ name,
In earth and heaven in Jesus’ name;
And in Jesus’ name I come to you
To share his power as he told me to.
Refrain.

Final prayer:

Thank you that we are accepted.
Thank you that we belong.
Thank you that you give us the water of life to drink.
Help us to be accepting of others,
and invite them to drink your water too.

Amen.